

December 19, 2002

Larry Davis, Executive Director
Washington State Board of Education
PO Box 47206
600 S Washington St.
Olympia, WA 98504-47206

Dr. Terry Bergeson, Chief Executive Officer
Washington State Superintendent of Public Instruction
Washington State Board of Education
PO Box 47206
600 S Washington St.
Olympia, WA 98504-47206

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

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Dear Mr. Davis and Dr. Bergeson:

This letter is written in support of WAC 180-78A-700, Washington State First Peoples' Language/Culture Certification Pilot Program.

In November of 1997, Washington State University signed a Memorandum of Understanding with six tribes in the region. Since that date, three additional tribes have signed. The MOU established a Native American Advisory Board to the President of Washington State University. I am also a member of this Board and we meet twice each year. These board meetings are an occasion for exploring ways that we can increase and improve the educational opportunities for Native Americans.

One of the areas identified as a critical issue early on was the preservation of Native languages. Since that time we have hosted two language roundtables and two language conferences working closely with MOU tribal representatives. We will continue to address these critical needs through programs established at Washington State University and explore ways in which we can be supportive and responsive to the educational needs of Native Americans in Washington State.

Sincerely,



Robert C. Bates
Provost

cc: First Peoples' Language/Culture Committee of Washington State